

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN
for the SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA



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D R A F T



**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION**

Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607
Phone: 510.817.5700
TTY/TDD: 510.817.5769
Fax: 510.817.5848
Web: www.mtc.ca.gov

Public Participation Plan

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(This appendix is available from the MTC Web site, www.mtc.ca.gov , or by calling MTC's Public Information Office at 510.817.5757.)

Metropolitan Transportation Commission Public Participation Plan Draft May 2007

I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them but to inform their discretion.

— Thomas Jefferson

I. Introduction

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission is the transportation planning and financing agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. It also serves as the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA), with oversight of the toll revenue from the region's seven state-owned toll bridges.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission's public involvement process aims to give the public ample opportunities for early and continuing participation in critical transportation projects, plans and decisions, and to provide full public access to key decisions. Engaging the public early and often in the decision-making process is critical to the success of any transportation plan or program, and is required by numerous state and federal laws, as well as by the Commission's own internal procedures.

This Public Participation Plan spells out MTC's process for providing the public and interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the transportation planning process.

A. Our Commitment to Public Participation

Guiding Principles

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission's public involvement procedures are built on the following guiding principles:

- Public participation is a dynamic activity that requires teamwork and commitment at all levels of the MTC organization.
- One size does not fit all — effective public participation strategies must be tailored to fit the audience and the issue.
- Citizen advisory committees can be used to hear and learn from many voices in the Bay Area.
- Engaging interested citizens in 'regional' transportation issues is challenging, but possible.
- Effective public outreach and involvement requires relationship building.

MTC Environmental Justice Principle on Public Involvement

In March 2006, the Commission adopted the following environmental justice principle, proposed by the Commission's Minority Citizens Advisory Committee (MCAC).

Environmental Justice Principle #1: Create an open and transparent public participation process that empowers low-income communities and communities of color to participate in decision making that affects them.

In response, this plan includes specific steps that MTC undertakes to involve low-income residents and communities of color in MTC's planning and investment decisions.

Early, Continuing Opportunities to Participate

- **Early Engagement Is Best**

MTC structures its major planning initiatives and funding decisions to provide for meaningful opportunities to help shape outcomes.

- **Regional Transportation Plan Is Key Document**

Because it is the blueprint for both new policies and investments for the Bay Area, MTC's regional transportation plan updates are one of the best places for interested citizens to get involved.

Communication Is a Two-Way Street

- **Response to Written Comments**

MTC pays close attention to the views of the public. MTC is committed to responding to every letter, fax and e-mail sent by members of the public.

- **Inform Commissioners and Public of Areas of Agreement and Disagreement**

MTC staff summarizes comments heard by various parties so that the Commissioners and the public have a clear understanding of where there is consensus on a given issue and where there is not.

- **Notify Public of Final Actions**

MTC staff makes every effort to ensure that meeting minutes reflect public comments and document how comments are considered in MTC's decisions. We strive to inform citizen participants on how public meetings/participation have contributed to MTC's key decisions and actions. When outcomes don't correspond to the views expressed, every effort is made to explain why not.

Access to All

MTC works to provide all Bay Area residents opportunities for meaningful participation, regardless of disabilities or language barriers. Further, we recognize that one should not need to be a transportation professional to understand our written and oral communications. In this spirit, we:

- provide auxiliary aids or interpreters to persons with disabilities or language translation barriers
- strive to communicate in plain language, and
- use visuals to translate detailed data into information that is more readily understood.

B. Federal Requirements

SAFETEA

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users — better known as SAFETEA — signed into law in 2005, underscores the need for public involvement and requires metropolitan planning agencies such as MTC to “provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment” on transportation plans and programs.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that transportation planning and programming be non-discriminatory on the basis of race, color, national origin or disability. The federal statute was further clarified and supplemented by the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 and a series of federal statutes enacted in the 1990s relating to the concept of environmental justice. The fundamental principles of environmental justice include:

- Avoiding, minimizing or mitigating disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations;
- Ensuring full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process; and
- Preventing the denial, reduction or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority populations and low-income communities.

Executive Orders

An Executive Order is an order given by the president to federal agencies. As a recipient of federal revenues, MTC assists federal transportation agencies in complying with these orders.

- Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions To Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations

In February 1994, President William Clinton signed Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice for Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, which mandates that federal agencies make achieving environmental justice part of their missions.

- Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency

Executive Order 13166 states that people who speak limited English should have meaningful access to federally conducted and federally funded programs and activities. It requires that all federal agencies identify any need for services to those with limited English proficiency and develop and implement a system to provide those services so all persons can have meaningful access to services.

- Executive Order 12372: Intergovernmental review of Federal programs

Executive Order 12372 calls for intergovernmental review of projects to ensure that federally funded or assisted projects do not inadvertently interfere with state and local plans and priorities. The Executive Order does not replace public participation, comment, or review requirements of other federal laws, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), but gives the states an additional mechanism to ensure federal agency responsiveness to state and local concerns.

Other Requirements

A number of other federal and state laws call on MTC to involve and notify the public in its decisions. MTC complies with all other public notification requirements of the state's Ralph M. Brown Act, the California Public Records Act, the California Environmental Quality Act, as well as the mandates of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, and other applicable state and federal laws.

C. Development of the Public Participation Plan

MTC staff began consulting with a range of interested parties as required by the SAFETEA legislation prior to drafting its Public Participation Plan. The process is outlined below. The following section (I-D) of this document summarizes key themes that emerged. More detailed information on comments received is included in Appendices C and D.

Meetings and Presentations

In January 2007, staff summarized for MTC's three advisory committees MTC's current public involvement activities and asked for suggestions on improvements that could be made. Volunteer advisors were recruited to serve on a subsequent focus group on this topic. Presentations were also made to the Bay Area Partnership's Technical Advisory Committee (staff from transportation and environmental protection agencies in the region) and MTC's Welfare to Work Working Group (social service agency representatives and transportation providers). In addition, staff met with clergy in the East Bay and South Bay on ways to engage the faith-based community.

Focus Groups

MTC held focus groups from January through April 2007 to solicit comments and feedback on MTC's public participation practices. Sessions were organized as follows:

- Representatives from MTC's three advisory committees (Feb. 13, 2007)
- Peer Panel with public information officers from a range of local, state, regional and federal transportation and environmental protection agencies (Feb.14, 2007)
- Participants in the LIFETIME program, a support group for low-income single parents attending college (March 9, 2007)
- Leaders of bicycle and pedestrian groups (March 21, 2007)
- Amalgamated Transit Union Representatives (April 12, 2007)
- Private Transportation Providers (April 17, 2007)

Web Survey

In addition to the various meetings and focus groups, MTC did a Web survey asking more questions about ways to improve public participation. The survey consisted of 18 questions and was available on the Web for 33 days. MTC e-mailed its entire contact database regarding the survey, and asked other groups – such as AC Transit, the Transportation and Land Use Coalition (TALC), the California Alliance for Jobs and Urban Habitat – to also notify their constituencies and partners. There were a total of 1,574 completed surveys and 216 partially completed surveys.

Tribal Government Consultation

There are six federally recognized Native American tribes in the San Francisco Bay Area. As part of the development of the Public Participation Plan, MTC invited these six governments to meet with MTC, the Association of Bay Area Governments and the state Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to comment on the Draft Public Participation Plan. The June 2007 government-to-government meeting will be facilitated by the National Indian Justice Center, an organization known to the tribal governments, and will involve policy board members from MTC and ABAG, as well as executive management staff from MTC, ABAG and Caltrans. The meeting will be held in Sonoma County, where most of the tribal governments in the Bay Region are located. The Sonoma County Transportation Authority also will participate.

The tribal summit will include discussion about how the tribal governments will participate in MTC's work, specifically in the development of the regional transportation plan. The summit also will introduce the tribal governments to the work of ABAG, and ABAG's current effort to identify areas where additional housing should be built to accommodate future population growth throughout the nine-county Bay Area. MTC will encourage individual meetings with each tribal government to discuss issues and concerns specific to each tribe. Because tribal governments are in MTC's contact database, they receive material from MTC throughout the year. The Draft Public Participation Plan will be revised as appropriate to reflect comments received at the June summit.

Interagency Review

Because MTC is but one of many players involved in transportation, and recognizing that transportation has direct impacts on the environment, it is essential that regional transportation planning and funding decisions are informed by affected governments at all levels. To facilitate a discussion on how best to engage numerous local, state and federal agencies in its plans and programs, MTC mailed a letter to some 50 affected agencies offering to consult directly on the Draft Public Participation Plan.

Staff is now following up with the agencies that have responded to the letter, and will make telephone calls to those that have yet to respond. Staff also appeared before the Partnership Technical Advisory Committee and the Welfare-to-Work Working Group (which includes social service agencies and transportation providers) to discuss development of the draft Public Participation Plan. Finally, MTC hosted a "peer panel" focus group of public information officers from a range of local, state, regional and federal transportation and environmental protection agencies (mentioned above) to discuss best practices on engaging the public and their agencies in MTC's key decisions.

D. What We Heard From the Public

Throughout the development of the public participation plan, we asked six key questions to prompt a discussion on best ways to engage the public in MTC's decision-making process. While we received a variety of responses to these questions, several common themes emerged. Following are the key comments heard, along with a response. More detailed summaries of comments are provided in Appendices C and D.

Comment —

- **Early Input is Powerful** — starting early gives participants the opportunity help shape the decision. Later input has far less impact.

Response —

- MTC's Regional Transportation Plan public participation begins many months (typically 18 months) in advance of final adoption to maximize opportunities for early, continuing input into the development of the plan.
- MTC advisory committees are routinely consulted prior to scheduled MTC standing committee votes on key planning and funding issues (for example, Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Plan, corridor studies, etc.).

Comment —

- **Focus on Outcomes** — direct participation toward asking questions that MTC really wants answered; show how comments shaped decisions and if not, explain why not.

Response —

- For major plans and programs pending before MTC, public participation programs are developed to encourage comments on areas that will inform critical decisions.
- Staff routinely summarizes areas of agreement and disagreement with pending proposals as expressed by the public for the Commission prior to votes, and then summarizes Commission actions for participants, making every effort to explain the impact of and the factors that contributed to the decision.

Comment —

- **Make it Relevant** — people are more apt to engage when they feel they have a stake in an issue. The challenge is to conduct public outreach and involvement programs in a way that brings an issue home for people.

- Say it Simply — avoid technical jargon, acronyms and communicate in clear, compelling language.

Response —

- MTC strives develop its public participation programs tailored to the specific needs of the community in which it seeks input, presenting issues and materials in a manner that is interesting, informative and relevant.

Comment —

- Redundancy is Good — notifying people of opportunities to participate multiple ways and multiple times is a valuable way to keep them engaged.

Response —

- MTC uses multiple media and methods to encourage participation, including posting information on its Web site, mailed notices, e-mail, partnerships with other public agencies or community groups to help spread the word, releases to the news media — including ethnic media and smaller community papers.

Comment —

- Remove Barriers — Hold meetings at times and locations convenient to your target audience; transit access is important; if appropriate, provide food, translations, child care or other amenities
- Go Where the People Are — conduct more outreach around the region at popular public gathering places, such as swap meets, farmers markets, colleges, transit hubs, community fairs and the like.

Response —

- MTC sites public forums near transit whenever feasible, or partners with transit operators to provide shuttle service as, appropriate. Locations are selected to maximize participation from targeted audiences; language translation services, child care, and refreshments are provided as appropriate to encourage participation.
- As appropriate, MTC seeks to contract with community-based organizations in low-income communities and communities of color to encourage participation.

Comment —

- Move Beyond Traditional Meetings – E-participation (interactive surveys, e-town hall meetings and the like) can be an effective way to hear from many voices.
- Web Access is Not Universal — while use of the Worldwide Web is growing, there are many with only intermittent or no access to the Internet. Therefore, it is critical to continue with traditional methods for involving the public.

Response —

- Because many people lack access to computers and the Internet, MTC commits to using traditional mail and “paper” for keeping interested residents engaged. We will, however, continue to make material on MTC’s Web site more interactive, including providing surveys and video clips, and provide the means for public comment opportunities via the Web and email.

II. Continuing Public Engagement

MTC is committed to an active public involvement process that provides comprehensive information, timely public notice and full public access to key decisions. MTC provides the public with myriad opportunities for continuing involvement in the work of the agency, through the following methods:

Advisory Panels

MTC has established a number of citizen advisory groups to foster ongoing public awareness of and involvement in transportation decision-making, especially by those groups who have been traditionally underserved by transportation systems. The advisory groups are consulted during the development of MTC policies and strategies, and their recommendations on various issues are reported to the Commission. Advisory committees also forward independent ideas to the Commission for consideration. They address commissioners directly at MTC committee and Commission meetings. MTC Resolution No. 3516 spells out the role and responsibilities of the Commission's three advisory committees, including ways to encourage more dialogue between Commissioners and advisors.

All advisory committee meetings are open to the public. In fact, tracking the agenda and discussions of MTC's advisory committees is one of the best ways for interested residents to engage early in the major policy and fiscal issues confronting MTC. Agendas are posted on the Web and citizens can request to be placed upon the mailing list to receive them. MTC advisory groups include:

- **MTC Advisory Council** – serves as a citizen advisory group to the Commission. The Advisory Council — composed of 24 members from a number of interest categories — ensures commissioners receive a diverse spectrum of input. The Advisory Council, whose members are appointed to two-year terms, includes the following interest categories: academia, architecture, business, community, construction, engineering, environmental, labor, public safety, the news media as well as user categories: freight, automobile, transit and non-motorized transportation. Additionally, two members are drawn from other existing MTC advisory groups: the Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee and the Minority Citizens Advisory Council.
- **Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee** – set up to advise MTC regarding issues of concern to older adults and to persons with disabilities, including access to transportation services and implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The 20-member panel

includes one elderly and one disabled advisor from each of the nine counties, selected by the Commissioner(s) representing each county. Commissioners representing the Association of Bay Area Governments and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission each select an additional advisor, either elderly or disabled, from the region at large.

- **Minority Citizens Advisory Committee** – created to ensure that the views and needs of minority and low-income communities are adequately reflected in MTC policies. The Commission appoints, for two-year terms, 26 members from the nine Bay Area counties to represent the region’s major ethnic minority groups: African American, Asian American, Hispanic and Native American. In addition, two members represent the views of low-income communities.
- **Bay Area Partnership** – the Bay Area Partnership collaboratively assists the Commission in fashioning consensus among its federal, state, regional, and local transportation agency partners regarding the policies, plans, and programs to be adopted and implemented by the Commission. MTC Resolution 3509 specifies the membership and role of the Partnership Board in advising MTC. Membership includes the chief staff from all public agencies representing:
 - transit operators
 - transportation facilities
 - congestion management agencies
 - public works agencies
 - airports and seaports
 - regional, state and federal transportation, environmental, and land use agencies

In addition to the panels listed above, MTC has established numerous technical advisory committees and working groups, and serves on other multi-agency advisory committees.



Get Involved

A major recruitment is done every two years to fill each advisory committee seat. However, vacancies occur periodically between recruitments. Check MTC’s Web site for current opportunities (www.mtc.ca.gov/get_involved/) or call MTC’s Public Information Office at 510.817.5757.

Commission and Committee Meetings

MTC encourages interested residents to attend MTC Commission and standing committee meetings to express their views. Items on the Commission agenda usually come in the form of recommendations from MTC's standing committees. Much of the detailed work of MTC is done at the committee level, and the Commission encourages the public to participate at this stage, either in person or by tracking developments via the Web. MTC standing committees are shown below:

MTC Standing Committee Structure & Responsibilities

| Legislation Committee | Administration Committee | Planning Committee | Programming & Allocations Committee | Operations Committee | Bay Area Toll Authority Oversight Committee |
|---|--|---|--|--|---|
| Annual MTC Legislative Program Positions on Legislation & Regulations Public Participation Citizen Advisory Committees | Oversight of Agency Budget and Agency Work Program Financial Reports/Audits Contracts Commission Procedures Personnel Policies | Regional Transportation Plan and Other Regional Plans (airports, seaports) Planning Corridor Studies State and Federal Air Quality Plans Transportation and Land Use Initiatives | Fund Estimate Fund Applications Fund Allocations to Specific Projects State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Federal Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) | Oversight of Transportation System Management and Operational Activities (Service Authority for Freeways and Expressways /SAFE) motorist aid programs, 511) Contracts Related to System Management and Operations | Oversees Work of Bay Area Toll Authority Fiscal Watchdog for Revenue Generated by Region's Seven State-Owned Bridges Oversees Multi-Billion Dollar Program to Update and Expand the Bridges |



Get Involved

Accessible Meetings: All Commission public meetings, workshops, forums, etc. are held in locations that are accessible to persons with disabilities. Assistive listening devices or other auxiliary aids are available upon request. Sign-language interpreters, readers for persons with visual impairments, or language translators will be provided if requested through MTC Public Information (510.817.5757 at least three working days (72 hours) prior to the meeting (five or more days' notice is preferred).

Access to MTC Meetings

| Web Access to MTC Meetings [www.mtc.ca.gov] | | | | If You Have Limited or No Web Access |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Meeting Materials | <i>WHAT ...</i> is available on the Web? | <i>WHEN ...</i> is it posted on the Web? | <i>HOW LONG...</i> is it available on the Web? | |
| Meeting Agendas | ♦Commission meetings ♦Standing committees ♦Advisory committees | One week prior to meeting ** | 6 months | Mailed to interested public or available at meeting* |
| Meeting Packets | <i>Same as above</i> | <i>Same as above</i> | 6 months | <i>Same as above</i> |
| Audiocast of Meetings | ♦Commission meetings ♦Standing committees ♦Partnership Board meetings | Listen to meeting live | 6 months | Meeting minutes will be mailed to interested public; copies of electronic recordings are available* |
| Monthly Tentative Meeting Schedule | Schedule of all Commission and advisory meetings | Posted and updated continuously | Posted and updated continuously | Mailed to interested public or available at MTC* |

* Contact the MTC Library or the Public Information Office to request meeting materials.

** Final agendas are posted 72 business hours in advance of the meeting time in the MTC Library.

Database Keeps Interested Residents in the Loop

MTC maintains a master database of interested residents, public agency staff and stakeholders. The database, which includes mailing information, e-mail addresses and other contact information, is organized around issues or events. This allows MTC to send targeted mailings to keep the public updated on the specific issues they are interested in, including information on how public meetings/participation have contributed to its key decisions and actions.



Get Involved

Any member of the public may request to be added to MTC's contact database by calling MTC's Public Information Office at 510.817.5757 or e-mailing info@mtc.ca.gov.

Public Meetings, Workshops and Forums

Public meetings on specific issues are held as needed. If statutorily required, formal public hearings are conducted, and notice of these public hearings is placed in the legal section of numerous newspapers in the MTC region, including newspapers circulated in minority communities of the Bay Area. Documents containing the proposals to be considered at MTC public hearings are mailed to major libraries throughout the MTC region prior to public hearings, and are made available to interested citizens upon request. In addition, these documents are placed on file in the MTC Library. The MTC Public Information Office can provide citizens with the names and addresses of libraries that received the public hearing documents.

MTC also conducts workshops, community forums, conferences and other events to keep the public informed and involved in various high-profile transportation projects and plans, and to elicit feedback from the public and MTC's partners. MTC holds meetings throughout the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area to solicit comments on major plans and programs, such as the long-range Regional Transportation Plan. Meetings are located and scheduled to maximize public participation (including evening meetings).

For major initiatives and events, MTC typically provides notice through posting information on MTC's Web site, and, if appropriate, through mailed notices, e-mail notices, and news releases.



Get Involved

Translators: If language is a barrier to your participation in meetings, MTC can arrange for an interpreter or translate meeting materials. Sign-language interpreters and readers for persons with visual impairments are also available. Please call MTC Public Information (510.817.5757) at least three working days (72 hours) prior to the meeting (five or more days' notice is preferred).

MTC's Library: Information for the Asking

The MTC Library, located in the Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter (the building that houses MTC offices) at 101 Eighth Street in Oakland, is open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. week days. This special library has an extensive collection of reports, books, and magazines, covering transportation planning, demographics, economic analysis, public policy issues and regional planning in the San Francisco Bay Area. It is designed to meet the information needs of government agencies, researchers, students, the media and anyone else who is interested in transportation, regional planning and related fields. Special features include:

- Extensive reference assistance by telephone, e-mail, fax and in-person
- Two public access Internet terminals
- Newspaper and magazine reading areas
- Coin-operated copier
- Open stacks

The commitment to using technology to extend public outreach continues with MTC Library staff posting on MTC's Web site the headlines of transportation and related stories from Bay Area daily newspapers as well as key statewide and national journals and other such publications. Readers can view the headlines each morning on MTC's Web site or subscribe to the service via e-mail or by RSS feed (a method of electronic notification of Web updates).



The Facts at Your Fingertips

MTC's publications listed on MTC's Web site can be ordered by phone (510.817.5836), e-mail (library@mtc.ca.gov) or by completing an online form. The entire Library collection can be searched using the online catalog. A wide range of MTC publications are available for downloading.

Publications

The Public Information Office publishes a variety of materials to inform the public about MTC's work, issues relating to Bay Area transportation and guides for transit users. The publications include:

- MTC's monthly newsletter, *Transactions*, offering news about MTC's activities, along with general transportation news for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. Between 13,000 and 15,000 copies are circulated free of charge to interested citizens, the news media, public officials, legislators, transit staff, national transportation groups, environmental groups, business groups and libraries.
- *Citizens Guide to MTC*, serving as a primer on MTC's roles and responsibilities for the region's interested citizens and local policy-makers, and providing basic information on the Bay Area's transportation network.
- *Moving Costs: A Transportation Funding Guide*, answering basic questions about transportation finance, and providing information for citizens who want to be involved in transportation funding decisions.
- *MTC's Annual Report*, providing information about MTC allocations and expenditures.

MTC also publishes guides for transit riders and other materials to help Bay Area residents learn more about transportation. These publications include working papers, technical memoranda, reports based on data from the U.S. Census and other sources that describe regional travel characteristics and travel forecasts. They are available to the public through the MTC Library, located at MTC offices. Most can be found on MTC's Web site. A charge may be levied to recover the cost of producing and (if applicable) mailing the publication.



Accessible Documents

MTC provides accurate, high-quality and culturally sensitive translations to more actively involve bilingual, multilingual and disabled communities in its public comment process when appropriate. A request for language interpreters at a meeting must be requested at least three working days (72 hours) prior to the meeting (five or more days' notice is preferred).

Web Site: www.mtc.ca.gov

MTC's Web site — www.mtc.ca.gov — is targeted to audiences ranging from transit riders seeking bus schedules to transportation professionals, elected officials and news media seeking information on particular programs, projects and public meetings.

Updated daily, the site provides information about MTC's projects and programs, the agency's structure and governing body and upcoming public meetings and workshops. It contains the names, e-mail addresses and phone numbers for staff and Commission members, all of MTC's current planning documents, publications located in the MTC Library, data from the 2000 census as well as detailed facts about the region's travel patterns.



Get Involved

Log onto MTC's Web site — www.mtc.ca.gov — for meeting agendas and packets. Live and archived audiocasts of meetings make it possible for interested parties to “tune in” at their convenience to all Commission and standing committee meetings.

Media Outlets Help Engage More Residents

MTC regularly issues news releases about Commission programs and actions of interest to the public. These include announcements of public workshops and hearings, recruitment for positions on MTC's advisory committees, and employment opportunities through MTC's high school and

college internship programs. News releases are sent to regional, state and national media — including minority print and broadcast outlets — and many are translated into Spanish, Chinese and other languages. In addition to news releases, MTC staff and Commissioners also host press events and news conferences (often in conjunction with other transportation agencies), visit newspaper editorial boards, and conduct briefings with Bay Area reporters and editors to discuss key initiatives such as the Regional Transportation Plan and MTC's transportation and land-use policy. These briefings provide an opportunity for both print and broadcast journalists to learn about MTC programs that may not immediately produce traditional hard news stories, thus providing background context for subsequent articles or radio/TV pieces.

Staff Dedicated to Assistance and Outreach

In addition to the components of MTC's public outreach program detailed above, MTC's commitment to public participation includes staff dedicated to involving the public in MTC's work. Public Information staff provides the following materials and services:

- Public Information staff can make available to the public any item on the MTC Web site (including meeting notices, agendas, and materials that accompany agenda items for meetings of the Commission and its committees and advisory panels) if a person does not have Internet access.
- Public Information staff work with interested organizations to arrange for MTC staff and commissioners to make presentations to community groups.
- MTC staff participate in regionwide community and special events, especially events in targeted ethnic and under-represented communities.
- Public Information staff will respond by telephone (510.817.5757), U.S. mail (101 Eighth Street, Oakland, CA 94607) or e-mail (info@mtc.ca.gov) from the public and the media about MTC.

III. Public Participation Techniques

MTC selects from an array of options to develop and execute specific public participation programs to inform its major decisions, such as for corridor studies, new funding policies or updates to the Regional Transportation Plan (see section IV).

For example, public involvement elements for the Regional Transportation Plan might include working with community-based organizations to cosponsor meetings, targeted news releases, a regional summit, a telephone and Web survey, workshops with interactive exercises and facilitated discussions, and a companion Web site that serves as a ready reference point to track key milestones in the overall development of the plan.

A menu of participation techniques follows, and includes some tried-and-true approaches as well as new suggestions we heard from the public while developing this plan.

Public Meetings/Workshops

- Get on meeting agendas of existing agencies
- Co-host workshops with community groups, business associations, etc.
- Contract with community-based organizations in low-income and minority communities for targeted outreach
- Sponsor a forum or summit with partner agencies, with the media or other community organizations

Techniques for Public Meetings/Workshops

- Open Houses
- Facilitated discussions
- Question-and-Answer sessions with planners and policy board members
- Break-out sessions for smaller group discussions on multiple topics
- Interactive exercises
- Customized presentations
- Vary time of day for workshops (day/evening)
- Conduct meeting entirely in alternative language (Spanish, Chinese, for example)

Visualization Techniques

- Maps
- Charts, illustrations, photographs
- Table-top displays and models
- Web content and interactive games

Polls/Surveys

- Statistically valid telephone polls
- Electronic surveys via Web
- Intercept interviews where people congregate, such as at transit hubs
- Printed surveys distributed at meetings, transit hubs, on-board transit vehicles, etc.

Focus Groups

- Participants recruited randomly from telephone polls
- Participants recruited by interest area

Printed Materials

- User-friendly documents (including use of executive summaries)
- Post cards
- Maps, charts, photographs, and other visual means of displaying information

Targeted Mailings/Flyers

- Work with community-based organizations to hand deliver flyers
- Mail to targeted database lists
- Distribute “Take-one” flyers to key community organizations
- Place notices on board transit vehicles and transit hubs

Utilize local media

- News Releases
- Invite reporters to news briefings
- Meet with editorial staff
- Opinion pieces/commentaries
- Purchase display ads
- Negotiate inserts into local printed media
- Visit minority media outlets to encourage use of MTC news releases
- Place speakers on Radio/TV talk shows
- Public Service Announcements on radio and TV
- Develop content for public access/cable television programming
- Civic journalism partnerships

Electronic Access to Information

- Web site with updated content
- Audio-cast of past public meetings/workshops
- Electronic duplication of open house/workshop materials

- Interactive Web with surveys, comment line
- Access to maps, charts
- Provide information in advance of public meeting

Notify Public via ...

- Blast e-mails
- Notice widely disseminated through new partnerships with community-based and interest organizations
- Newsletters
- Printed materials
- Electronic access to information
- Local Media
- Flyers

Newsletters

- MTC's newsletter *Transactions*
- Commissioner newsletters
- Submit articles for publication in community/corporate newsletters

Other Outreach

- Information/comment tables or booths at community events and public gathering spaces
- Comment Cards/Take-One Cards on-board transit vehicles

IV. Development of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

There are two key transportation initiatives of MTC's that are specially called out in federal law as needing early and continuing opportunities for public participation — development of the Regional Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program.

Regional Transportation Plan

The long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) prioritizes and guides all Bay Area transportation development over 25 years. The RTP is the comprehensive blueprint for Bay Area surface transportation investment (transit, highway, local roads, bicycle and pedestrian projects). Through the RTP, MTC identifies how much money is available to address critical transportation needs and sets the policy on how this funding is spent. The RTP is updated at least once every four years to reflect reaffirmed or new planning priorities and changing projections of growth and travel demand, based on a reasonable forecast of future revenues available to the region.

The Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) implements the policy and investment priorities expressed by the public and adopted by MTC in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). All projects included in the tip must be consistent with the RTP. In this way, public comments made as part of the RTP are reflected in the TIP as well. Like the RTP, the TIP is updated at least once every four years. However, it covers only a four-year timeframe.

Public Participation Opportunities in the RTP and TIP

Because of its comprehensive, long-term vision, the RTP provides the earliest and the best opportunity for interested residents and public agencies to influence MTC's policy and investment priorities for Bay Area transportation. It is at this earlier, RTP stage where funding priorities and major project design concepts are established, and impacts of transportation on the environment are addressed. Thus, there is comparatively less value for public participation in the TIP, which includes only those programs and projects that are already included in the RTP.

MTC's procedures for public participation and interagency consultation for the RTP and TIP are detailed in Appendix A. One easy way to engage on transportation policies and investment is to request to be added to MTC's RTP database (see below for instructions).



Get Involved in the Regional Transportation Plan

One of the best ways to impact MTC's policy and investment decisions is to participate in an update of the regional transportation plan (RTP). Contact MTC's Public Information Office at 510.817.5757, or e-mail info@mtc.ca.gov and ask to be included in MTC's RTP database.

V. Evaluation and Update of the Public Participation Plan

MTC's Public Participation Plan is not a static document, but an on-going strategy that will be periodically reviewed and updated based on our experiences and the changing circumstances of the Commission and the transportation community it serves.

As part of every public outreach and involvement program developed for the regional transportation plan and other major planning studies that feed into the plan, MTC will set performance measures for the effectiveness of the participation program, and report on the results. These performance reports will serve to inform and improve future outreach and involvement programs, including future updates to this Public Participation Plan.

For example, MTC identified specific performance measures to gauge progress toward accomplishing a set of goals laid out in the Transportation 2030 Public Outreach Plan. Evaluation forms, available in English and three other languages, were handed out at the end of each public outreach meeting, including the kick-off summit. These forms asked participants to evaluate nine aspects of the public involvement program related to the quality of outreach, meeting handouts, presentation, facilitation, and opportunities for feedback. More than 80 percent of the participants responded positively to all nine aspects of the outreach program.

This Public Participation Plan may be subject to minor changes from time to time. Any major updates will include a review by MTC's advisory committees, 45-day public comment period with wide release and notification of the public about the proposed changes, review by the Commission's Legislation and Public Affairs Committee (a public meeting), and approval by the Commission.

MTC Public Participation Plan

Appendix A

Public Participation and Intergovernmental Consultation Procedures: Regional Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program

Appendix A

A. The Regional Transportation Plan

The long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) prioritizes and guides all Bay Area transportation development over 25 years. The RTP is the comprehensive blueprint for transportation investment (transit, highway, local roads, bicycle and pedestrian projects), and establishes the financial foundation for how the region invests in its surface transportation system by identifying how much money is available to address critical transportation needs and setting the policy on how this funding is spent. The RTP is updated every four years to reflect reaffirmed or new planning priorities and changing projections of growth and travel demand, based on a reasonable forecast of future revenues available to the region.

MTC prepares two technical companion documents: a program-level Environmental Impact Report per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, and air quality conformity analyses (to ensure clean air mandates are met) per federal requirements. Certain amendments to the RTP may require a revision or update to these technical documents. The process for preparing and conducting interagency consultation on the conformity analysis is described in MTC Resolution No. 3757.

Updating and Amending the Regional Transportation Plan

A complete update of an existing regional transportation plan is required at least once every four years. The RTP also may be amended in between major updates under certain circumstances, as described below in the table and narrative:

- **RTP Update**

This is a complete update of the existing long-range regional transportation plan, which is been prepared pursuant to state and federal requirements.

RTP updates include extensive public consultation and participation involving hundreds of Bay Area residents, public agency officials and stakeholder groups over many months. MTC's three advisory committees play key roles in providing feedback on the policy and investment strategies contained in the plan. The Bay Area Partnership — a group of officials from key public agencies at all levels who work in the transportation or environmental protection arenas — also actively participate in the development of an RTP update.

Specific public participation plans with performance benchmarks are developed for every RTP update, drawing from the public participation techniques listed in Section III of MTC's Public Participation Plan.



Get Involved

One of the ways to have the most impact on MTC's policy and investment decision is to participate in an update of the regional transportation plan (RTP). Contact MTC's Public Information Office at 510.817.5757, or info@mtc.ca.gov and ask to be included in MTC's RTP database.

Updating and Amending the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

| Public Participation for RTP Update <i>[Procedures may not occur in order shown]</i> | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| 1 Extensive public participation plan developed and executed over many months to provide early and continuing opportunities to comment. Public Participation Program reviewed with advisory committees | 2 Numerous targeted workshops with MTC advisory committees, stakeholder groups and partner agencies MTC database notified of opportunities to participate | 3 Opportunities to participate via the Web Key draft documents posted to the Web for public review and comment | 4 Inter-governmental consultation, as appropriate Review as appropriate based on Air Quality Conformity Protocol (MTC Resolution No. 3757) | 5 Draft plan is released for 30-day public review. At least one formal public hearing before MTC's Planning Committee MTC responds to significant comments | 6 Adoption by the MTC Commission at a public meeting |
| Public Participation for RTP Amendment <i>[Procedures may not occur in order shown]</i> | | | | | |
| 1 Proposed amendment released for a 30-day public review. | 2 Posted on MTC's Web site for public review | 3 Reviewed at a public meeting of MTC's Planning Committee | 4 Approved at a public meeting by the MTC Commission | | |
| Public Participation for RTP Administrative Modification <i>[Procedures may not occur in order shown]</i> | | | | | |
| 1 No public review | 2 Approved by MTC Executive Director | 3 Modifications posted on MTC Web site | | | |

▪ RTP Amendment

An amendment is a major revision to a long-range RTP, including adding or deleting a project, major changes in project/project phase costs, initiation dates, and/or design concept and scope (e.g., changing project locations or the number of through traffic lanes). Changes to projects that are included in the RTP only for illustrative purposes (such as in the financially unconstrained “vision” element) do not require an amendment. An amendment requires public review and comment, demonstration that the project can be completed based on expected funding, and/or a finding that the change conforms to air quality requirements. Amendments that require an update to the air quality conformity analysis will be subject to the conformity and consultation procedures described in MTC Resolution No. 3757.

- **RTP Administrative Modification**

This is a minor revision to a long-range RTP. They are used for minor changes to project/project phase costs, funding sources, and/or initiation dates. An administrative modification is a revision that does not require public review and comment, demonstration that the project can be completed based on expected funding, nor a finding that the change conforms to air quality requirements. As with an RTP amendment, changes to projects that are included in the RTP’s financially unconstrained “vision” element) may be changed without going through this process.

B. Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) implements the policy and investment priorities expressed by the public and adopted by MTC in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). In this way, public comments made as part of the RTP are reflected in the TIP as well. The TIP covers a four-year timeframe, and all projects included in the TIP are consistent with the RTP, which covers 25 years. The TIP is a comprehensive listing of Bay Area surface transportation projects — including transit, highway, local roadway, bicycle and pedestrian investments — that:

- receive federal funds, or are
- subject to a federally required action, or are
- regionally significant, for federal air quality conformity purposes.

The TIP includes a financial plan that demonstrates there are sufficient revenues to ensure that the funds committed (or “programmed”) to the projects are available to implement the projects or project phases. Adoption of the TIP also requires a finding of conformity with federal air quality requirements.

Individual project listings may be viewed through MTC's Web-based Fund Management System at www.mtc.ca.gov/funding/fms_intro.htm. As part of MTC's commitment to public involvement, some projects in the TIP are mapped to present the online reader with a visual location of the project. Individuals without access to the Internet may view a printed copy of the project listings at the MTC Library in Oakland at 101 Eighth Street.

Updating and Amending the TIP

Federal regulations require that the TIP be updated at least once every four years. From time to time, circumstances dictate that changes be made to the TIP between updates. MTC will consider such amendments when the circumstances prompting the change are compelling, and the change will not adversely affect air quality conformity or negatively impact the financial constraint findings of the TIP.

In addition to a TIP update, changes to the TIP may occur as TIP Amendments, TIP Administrative Modifications and TIP Technical Corrections. Further explanation about TIP updates, and how the types of amendments are processed are shown in the table and narrative that follows.

MTC maintains a free, subscription-based e-mail distribution list of individuals, transportation officials and staff interested in being informed of TIP-related changes and actions. Pertinent information may be distributed to recipients as needed to alert the individuals of notices and information regarding the development and approval of a new TIP and updates, such as the notice of a TIP update, notice and approval of the TIP amendments, and other information as deemed appropriate. Known as TIP-INFO Notification, this is a tool to help facilitate public review and comment and coordination with transportation and other public agencies.

Due to occasional unforeseen technical difficulties, and the fact that delivery of e-mail cannot be guaranteed, TIP-INFO is not considered a specific requirement for the public involvement process, but rather an optional enhanced service to provide added convenience for those interested in the TIP. Anyone may sign up for the service at MTC's Web site.

Updating and Amending the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

| TIP Update <i>[Procedures may not occur in order shown]</i> | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| 1 Notify public via TIP-INFO Notification (e-mail) Notify public, including RTP participants, via U.S. mail; use appropriate lists within MTC's database | 2 Review by Bay Area Partnership | 3 Intergovernmental consultation, as appropriate Review as appropriate based on Air Quality Conformity Protocol (MTC Resolution No. 3757) 30-day public review, public comment period Draft TIP in MTC Library and mailed to major libraries throughout the Bay Area Posted on MTC Web site | 4 Inform media, as appropriate MTC's response to significant comments compiled into an appendix in the final TIP | 5 Review by an MTC standing committee, typically the Programming & Allocations Committee (a public meeting); referral to Commission | 6 Adoption by Commission at a public meeting Approval by Caltrans Approval by Federal Highway and Federal Transit administrations (FHWA/FTA) |
| TIP Amendment <i>[Procedures may not occur in order shown]</i> | | | | | |
| 1 Notify public via TIP-INFO Notification (e-mail) | 2 Review by Bay Area Partnership Posted in MTC Library Posted on MTC Web site | 3 Only for those amendments that require an air quality conformity analysis: • 30-day public review, public comment period per Air Quality Conformity Protocol (MTC Resolution No. 3757) | 4 Review by an MTC standing committee (a public meeting); referral to Commission | 5 Approval by MTC policy board Approval by Caltrans Approval by FHWA/FTA | |
| TIP Administrative Modification <i>[Procedures may not occur in order shown]</i> | | | | | |
| 1 No public review | 2 Approval by MTC Executive Director or designee, per Commission delegation Approval by Caltrans | 3 After approval, review by Bay Area Partnership | 4 After approval: • post in MTC Library • post on MTC Web site • notify public via TIP-INFO Notification | | |
| TIP Technical Correction <i>[Procedures may not occur in order shown]</i> | | | | | |
| 1 No public review | 2 Corrections by staff | 3 No approval required | | | |

- **TIP Update**

This is a complete update of the existing TIP, to reflect new planning priorities and changing projections of growth and travel demand, based on a realistic forecast of future revenues and that demonstrates a new air quality conformity determination pursuant to state and federal requirements. An update of the TIP is required at least once every four years. Because all projects included in the TIP are consistent with the RTP, MTC's extensive public outreach for development of the RTP is reflected in the TIP as well. The TIP implements, in the short-term, the vision of the regional transportation plan and is responsive to comments received during the development of the RTP.

- **TIP Amendment**

This is a revision that involves a major change to the TIP, such as the addition or deletion of a project; a major change in project cost or project/project phase initiation date; or a major change in design concept or design scope (e.g., changing project termini or the number of through traffic lanes). An amendment is a revision that requires public review and comment, re-demonstration of fiscal constraint, or an air quality conformity determination. For those amendments requiring an air quality conformity analysis, the Air Quality Conformity Protocol as described in MTC Resolution No. 3757 will apply.

- **TIP Administrative Modification**

An administrative modification includes minor changes to a project's costs or to the cost of a project phase; minor changes to funding sources of previously included projects; and minor changes to the initiation date of a project or project phase. An administrative modification does not require public review and comment, re-demonstration of fiscal constraint, or an air quality conformity determination.

- **TIP Technical Correction**

Technical corrections may be made by MTC staff as necessary. Technical corrections are not subject to an administrative modification or an amendment, and may include revisions such as: changes to information and projects that are included only for illustrative purposes; changes to information outside of the quadrennial (four-year) TIP period; changes to information not required to be included in the TIP per federal regulations; or changes to correct simple errors and data entry errors. These technical corrections cannot impact the cost, scope, or schedule within the quadrennial (four-year) element of the TIP, or be subject to a public review and comment process, re-demonstration of fiscal constraint, or an air quality conformity determination.

C. RTP and TIP Intergovernmental Consultation Procedures

Public Agency Consultation

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users – better known as SAFETEA – expanded and specified a public participation process, directing metropolitan transportation agencies like MTC to consult with officials responsible for other types of planning activities that are affected by transportation in the area, be that conservation and historic preservation or local planned growth and land use management.

The most effective time to involve the public and governmental agencies in the planning and programming process is as early as possible. As such, the development of the regional transportation plan, with its 25-year timeframe, is the earliest and the key decision point for the interagency consultation process. It is at this stage where funding priorities and major projects' design concepts and scopes are established. Furthermore, MTC's funding programs and any projects flowing from them are derived directly from the policies and the transportation investments contained in the regional transportation plan. Because the RTP governs the selection and programming of projects in the TIP, MTC considers the agency consultation process as a continuum starting with the regional transportation plan. The RTP is the key decision point for policy decisions regarding project and program priorities that address mobility, air quality, and other factors; the TIP is a short-term programming document containing only those investments identified and approved by the RTP.

MTC will use the following approaches to coordinate and consult with affected agencies in the development of the RTP and the TIP. Throughout the process, consultation will be based on the agency's needs and interests. At minimum, all agencies will be provided an opportunity to comment on the RTP and TIP updates.

- **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)**

MTC's compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) serves as the framework to consult, as appropriate, in the development of the RTP with state and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protections, conservation, and historic preservation. This consultation will include other agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities in the MTC region that are affected by transportation, to the maximum extent practicable.

MTC will involve the federal land management agencies and other federal agencies as well. While the RTP is not subject to the federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), MTC will, concurrently with the CEQA outreach and consultation, meet and confer with federal agencies. The Notice of Preparation will notify and provide consultation opportunities with agencies at the onset of the RTP process. In addition, MTC will hold agency and public scoping meetings to solicit early input on areas of concern to be addressed in the CEQA environmental document. Publication of the CEQA-mandated Notice of Preparation allows federal, state and local agencies and the public an early opportunity to comment on various RTP issues. Subsequently, the publication of the Draft RTP and the Draft Environmental Impact Report provides the opportunity for agencies to comment on the plan's draft policies, projects, environmental impacts and mitigation activities/measures prior to the Commission adoption of the RTP and certification of the environmental document.

Additionally, the involvement of federal agencies in the RTP can link the transportation planning process with the federal NEPA process. As the projects in the RTP and TIP continue down the pipeline toward construction or implementation, most must comply with NEPA to address individual project impacts.

- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

As discussed above, crucial decisions whether or not to support or fund a transportation program or project in the region first occurs at the Regional Transportation Plan level. In contrast, the TIP defines project budgets, schedules and phasing for those programs and projects that are already part of the RTP. By the time the TIP is developed, the Commission has already made planning decisions and project selection decisions. Therefore, for many agencies there is comparatively less value in consulting with MTC during the development of a TIP, in particular for agencies that are not project sponsors or are not concerned with air quality conformity. Additionally, the TIP does not provide any additional information regarding environmental impacts, beyond that found in the program-level environmental analysis prepared for the RTP.

As such, starting at the RTP development stage, MTC staff will concurrently consult with all agencies regarding the TIP. Subsequent to the RTP, additional consultations at the TIP stage will be based on an agency's needs and interests. At minimum, all agencies will be provided

with an opportunity to comment on the TIP. Project sponsors — including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), local jurisdictions, transit operators, and county congestion management agencies (CMAs) — review and consult with MTC on each of their respective projects in the TIP. Furthermore, through the Bay Area Partnership, these agencies (and any other interested agency) are involved every step of the way in the establishment of MTC programs, selection of projects and their inclusion in the TIP.

Tribal Government Consultation

There are six federally recognized Native American tribes in the San Francisco Bay Area. MTC organizes a government-to-government consultation with the tribes to involve the governments in the development of the regional transportation plan and the companion Transportation Improvement Program. The consultation begins early in the process of developing the regional transportation plan, and generally includes a “tribal summit” with all six tribal governments, followed by individual meetings with the tribes.

The tribal summit often will include MTC’s partner agencies, the Association of Bay Area Governments, the state Department of Transportation and the appropriate congestion management agencies. The tribal summit also may include facilitation by a Native American non-profit organization known to the tribal governments.

Government-to-government consultation with the tribes will involve policy board members from MTC and of any participating partner agencies, as well as executive management. These meetings are held in a location convenient to the tribal governments, often in Sonoma County, which is the Bay Area county in which most of the tribal governments are located.

The tribal summit will include discussion about how the tribal governments will participate in MTC’s work, and specifically in the development of long-range plan, as well as to introduce the tribal governments to the work of MTC’s partner agencies.

As a next step after the tribal summit, MTC encourages individual meetings with each tribal government throughout development of the regional transportation plan to discuss issues and concerns specific to each tribe. The governments also receive material from MTC throughout the year.

MTC Public Participation Plan

Appendix B

Government-to-Government Consultation

The Bay Area Partnership Review and Coordination

Air Quality Conformity and Interagency Consultation Protocol

Intergovernmental Review via
Regional and State Information Clearinghouses

Appendix B Government-to-Government Consultation

A. The Bay Area Partnership Review and Coordination

MTC established the Bay Area Partnership in 2002 to collaboratively assist the Commission in fashioning consensus among its federal, state, regional, and local transportation agency partners regarding the policies, plans, and programs to be adopted and implemented by the Commission. Membership includes a chief staff officer from all public agencies representing the following transportation interests:

- Transit operations
- Transportation facilities
- Congestion management agencies
- Public works agencies
- Airports and seaports
- Regional, state and federal transportation, environmental, and land use agencies

The Partnership Board consults on critical transportation policies issues while the Partnership Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC) considers on-going and more technical issues. These meetings are open to the public. The Partnership Board meetings are audiocast live and later archived on MTC's Web site. The primary means for promoting exchange of information and ideas with partner agencies on the Bay Area's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) updates and amendments is through the Partnership. The status of any RTP/TIP administrative modifications and amendments are reviewed via the PTAC and/or its work group meetings for consideration. For RTP/TIP updates, PTAC will be kept informed and consulted throughout the process through meeting items and presentations as needed.

B. Air Quality Conformity and Interagency Consultation Protocol

A dialogue between agencies over air quality considerations must take place in certain instances prior to MTC adoption of its RTP or TIP. These consultations are conducted through the Air Quality Conformity Task Force — including the Bay Area Air Quality Management District as well as representatives of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the California Air Resources Board

(ARB), Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration and other state and local transportation agencies. These agencies review updates and, in certain instances, amendments to the RTP and TIP to ensure they conform to air quality regulations via an air quality conformity analysis.

In accordance with official Transportation Air Quality Conformity Protocol Interagency Consultation procedures (MTC Resolution No. 3757), MTC must implement the interagency consultation process for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area before making a transportation conformity determination on the RTP or TIP. In developing an update to the RTP/TIP, MTC will bring important issues to the Partnership for discussion and feedback. All materials that are relevant to interagency consultation, such as the RTP/TIP schedule, important RTP/TIP-related issues, and draft RTP/TIP, will also be transmitted to the Conformity Task Force for discussion and feedback. Similar consultation will occur for RTP/TIP amendments requiring an air quality conformity determination.

C. Intergovernmental Review via Regional and State Information Clearinghouses

The intent of intergovernmental review, per Executive Order 12372, is to ensure that federally funded or assisted projects do not inadvertently interfere with state and local plans and priorities. Applicants in the Bay Area with programs/projects for inter-governmental review are required to submit documentation to Association of Bay Area Government's (ABAG) Area-wide Clearinghouse and the State Clearinghouse in Sacramento, which are responsible for coordinating state and local review of applications for federal grants or loans under state-selected programs. In this capacity, it is also the function of the Clearinghouses to coordinate state and local review of federal financial assistance applications, federally required state plans, direct federal development activities, and federal environmental documents. The purpose of the clearinghouses is to afford state and local participation in federal activities occurring within California. The Executive Order does not replace public participation, comment, or review requirements of other federal laws, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), but gives the states an additional mechanism to ensure federal agency responsiveness to state and local concerns.

ABAG's clearinghouse notifies, via the bi-weekly e-mail Intergovernmental Review Newsletter, entities and individuals at all governmental levels, as well as certain public interest groups that might be affected the proposed project or program. The state and area-wide clearinghouses are a valuable

tool to help ensure that state and local agency comments are included along with any applications submitted by an applicant to the federal agencies. MTC uses this service to notice TIP updates and those TIP amendments that require an air quality determination. This service is not used for TIP amendments that do not require an air quality conformity determination, for TIP administrative modifications and for TIP technical corrections. The clearinghouses also receive and distribute environmental documents prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and coordinate the state-level environmental review process. The RTP is subject to CEQA and therefore is reviewed through the clearinghouses as well.

MTC Public Participation Plan

Appendix C

Public Participation Plan Outreach

Summary of Focus Group, Presentation and Web Survey Comments

Summary of Focus Group, Presentation and Web Survey Comments

Prior to development of the Public Participation Plan, staff sought input from members of MTC's three advisory committees, and solicited comments from the Bay Area Partnership's Technical Advisory Committee (staff from transportation and environmental protection agencies in the region) and MTC's Welfare to Work Working Group (social service agency representatives and transportation providers). In addition, staff met with clergy in the East Bay and South Bay on ways to engage the faith-based community.

In addition, MTC held focus groups from January through April 2007 to solicit comments and feedback on MTC's public participation practices. Sessions were organized as follows:

- Representatives from MTC's three advisory committees (Feb. 13, 2007)
- Peer Panel with public information officers from a range of local, state, regional and federal transportation and environmental protection agencies (Feb.14, 2007)
- Participants in the LIFETIME program, a support group for low-income single parents attending college (March 9, 2007)
- Leaders of bicycle and pedestrian groups (March 21, 2007)
- Amalgamated Transit Union Representatives (April 12, 2007)
- Private Transportation Providers (April 17, 2007)

MTC also conducted a Web survey asking more questions about ways to improve public participation. The survey consisted of 18 questions and was available on the Web for 33 days. MTC e-mailed its entire contact database regarding the survey, and asked other groups – such as AC Transit, the Transportation and Land Use Coalition (TALC), the California Alliance for Jobs and Urban Habitat – to also notify their constituencies and partners. There were a total of 1,574 completed surveys and 216 partially completed surveys.

Common themes emerged from this outreach. As one might expect, these themes were often delineated by the medium used to obtain the response (for example, Web survey respondents were more apt to want to communicate via the Internet or e-mail, etc.). The comments summarized below provide an overview of responses from focus groups to the specific questions we asked.

Summary of Focus Group, Presentation and Web Survey Comments (continued)

1. What would encourage you to attend a meeting or event to discuss Bay Area transportation issues?

Web survey respondents informed us that an interesting or relevant meeting topic had the greatest impact on meeting attendance. Other recommendations made by both focus group participants and Web survey respondents include consideration of the time and location of a meeting, the ability of meeting participants to impact MTC's decision-making process, and the use of community and media partnerships to promote a meeting. Participants in a low-income focus group recommended the use of childcare and food as a way to encourage attendance. Finally, our advisory committee members recommended that we educate the public about MTC as a way to create relevance and encourage the public's attendance at meetings and events.

2. What is the best way to notify you about a meeting?

Both Web survey respondents and focus group participants believed that e-mail was the best way to notify the public of a meeting. Notification by regular mail, display of posters or flyers in transit vehicles or stations and use of radio or broadcast public service announcements were mentioned as other successful ways to notify the public. Meeting organization and logistics also matter. Because people are so busy, it is advisable to promote a meeting multiple times using a variety of media. Last, we were reminded that Internet access isn't universal and encouraged to provide non-Internet alternatives for meeting promotion to ensure that everyone is included.

3. Which of the following methods would help you express your views at a meeting?

Responses to this question were consistent with the medium used: Web survey participants recommended a questionnaire or survey to express views, while focus group participants recommended facilitated discussion or small groups. Focus group participants noted that those uncomfortable providing public comment at a meeting might prefer to provide written comments instead. Our peers felt that the use of charts and graphs would assist with visualization of meeting material, and improve the quality of the input.

4. Other than a meeting, what other methods would you most likely use to express your views?

Once again, responses were medium specific: Web survey respondents preferred Web surveys to express views, while focus group participants preferred in-person methods, such as staffing a kiosk at a public event or use of a focus group. Both groups also recommended

e-mail and regular mail comments as a method to express views. Last, we were reminded again that because Internet access isn't universal, we should ensure that non-Internet methods are always available.

5. How would you like to have detailed material presented to you?

Web survey respondents believed that providing information online for review in advance is the best way to explain detailed information to the public. The respondents also felt that the use of charts or other visual aids, brochures, flyers or other printed material also are successful media for material presentation. The focus group participants reminded us to refrain from using acronyms during a meeting, and overwhelmingly recommended the use of understandable text combined with illustrative graphics. MTC also was strongly encouraged to use multiple media in order to make materials easier to understand.

6. MTC would like to keep you informed of how your comments have factored into its decisions. What is the best way to inform you of MTC's actions?

Both Web survey respondents and focus group participants felt that e-mail is the best way to notify the public about MTC's actions. Focus group participants encouraged the use of community groups, via the group's newsletters and Web sites, and the use of the media, both print and broadcast, to inform the public. The low-income focus group participants also encouraged the use of regular mail as an alternative to e-mail.

Public Participation Plan
Notes from Advisor Brainstorming Sessions
January/February 2007

MTC staff visited each of our three advisory committees in January 2007 in order to brainstorm ideas on how to best attract the public to participate in MTC's decision-making process. The notes below reflect the comments made at each of the three meetings; committee members made all comments unless otherwise noted.

Minority Citizens Advisory Committee

January 9, 2007

3:30 – 5 p.m.

Ideas:

- Internet; Web surveys; email blasts
- Determine if there is a connection with our outreach efforts and the transit rider survey now under way. The demographic data gleaned from the survey may help us focus MTC's outreach to transit riders
- Need more alternate language speakers to translate more collateral, provide information
- Offer refreshments at meetings
- Announcements on buses
- Hold separate community meetings by language
- Offer childcare at meeting
- Ads in alternate language newspapers
- Payment for volunteer efforts
- MTC should offer cell phones/computer access for advisors
- Suggests a focus group for welfare to work participants
- While MTC does a good job gathering information, they need to do a better job with what they do with the information (comment made by audience member)
- Explicit consideration of public input should be made (comment made by audience member)
- Commissioners need to provide reasoned responses, they need to weigh more heavily the input they receive from the public (comment made by audience member)

Advisory Council

January 10, 2007

12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Ideas:

- Treasure Island Banner
- As a type of focus group, consider telling a certain group of people to watch a TV program (cable access) at a certain hour, then follow up with a phone call to ask questions, get comments on the issue/topic, etc.
- City/County meetings broadcast on cable access public television stations are well watched; consider use of public access stations
- Distribute Web surveys via other agencies/organizations listservs

- Provide text for use in scrolling text that runs on public access stations. This is a way to drive people to a Web site to take an online survey, or provide a phone number for people to call and take a phone survey
- Place ads in regional minority media, such as *India West* and *India Currents* newspapers. Also use of public service announcements on minority radio/TV stations is a good idea
- Ask certain organizations, e.g., AARP and the Council on Aging, to provide a link to MTC on their Web sites. This will help drive constituents to MTC's Web site
- Consider providing an inducement to people to participate. We could learn from the corporate marketing world and pay people to participate in a meeting or survey (time is not a trivial matter for low income families juggling multiple jobs)
- Provide food at meetings
- Advertise/get stories in the many "throw-away" free weekly and daily newspapers; they are well read. This is a medium that's regional and local, and free to use
- Many low-income residents are suspicious of government; need to use someone who is trusted by the communities. San Mateo County's Half Moon Bay/Pescadero area is mentioned as a low-income area, rural, with many transit dependent residents who may need to be contacted by another more trusted agency on behalf of MTC
- A lot of people, including professionals, don't know who MTC is, or what MTC does. He suggests more outreach to professional groups, such as Society of Engineers, East Bay Municipal Engineers, The American Public Works Association, Northern California Chapter, ITE and Home Builders Association
- Use transportation professionals to help get information to filter down to regular folks for their input
- Most transit agency advertising contracts require that a certain percentage of advertising on buses be reserved for public service messages. Contact CBS Viacom for placement of car cards or ads on the backs of buses. Also consider posters in the bus shelters. If you are trying to advertise a particular meeting, advertise in buses used on routes through the neighborhood you are targeting
- There are many non-profits trying to get exposure on radio/TV via public service announcements, he suggests that it might be easier to get paid news exposure rather than using PSAs. It is also difficult to get MTC's messages down to 8 seconds, which is the length of time that most segment sponsorships or PSA spots. Getting exposure on a local news program is best exposure
- An impression exists that government officials have already made up their minds on policies before meeting with the public. MTC has done a better job recently about this but should make sure that it keeps this in mind in the future
- Suggests that advisors could commit to sending an email to a list that an advisor belongs to; could work with staff on the wording of such messages
- Timing is a concern – at what point is the public brought in to allow the public to help share what is happening
- For low-income residents, taking time to attend a meeting can mean losing some work hours. Suggests community organizations be hired to interview low-income populations to get their input without residents having to attend an MTC meeting
- Suggests we hand out notices at toll plazas
- Notwithstanding room for improvement, MTC does a better job with outreach than do the transit operators or CMAs. Does MTC have any resources or ability to help local transportation agencies do a better job with outreach to the public? Should we consider a grant program along these lines?
- People don't want to talk to the wind; MTC needs to listen to the public and let the public speak on what each member of the public has in mind, rather than force comments on pre-determined MTC decisions/topics (comment made by audience member)

Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee

January 11, 2007

10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Ideas:

- Marin meetings: We may consider holding our meetings at Whistlestop Wheels in San Rafael (they have a dining room and serve lunch to groups for a fee)
- Bridge groups, bingo groups, bowling clubs
- Very few people know who/what MTC is; we should educate the public in order to better attract the public to meetings
- Make it clear that this (the Public Participation Plan) is a living document that can be improved and upgraded as time goes on
- The transit-riding public is much broader than minority or elderly and disabled
- Suggest people be encouraged to phone in comments as another way of letting the public participate
- Reach out to college-age residents, or younger by contacting/distributing materials at colleges
- Reach out to a younger audience and ask them how they go about obtaining information. Consider new media, blogging, Social networking – these methods, technologies, require no postage
- Attend meetings at senior housing developments, mobile home parks. Distribute flyers at senior centers
- Advertise in senior or disabled publications, especially in non-profit newsletters.
- Suggests ads in local papers. Mentions Sonoma Seniors newsletter
- Seniors are available to attend meetings because they are retired, but for the general working public, need to provide childcare
- Need to provide transportation to and from meeting location
- Consider TV commercials or TV PSAs
- Utilize special elderly and disabled programming on cable TV stations (Jeff Clark/KQED)
- Utilize public access TV stations. Package Commission meetings or EDAC meetings for replay on public access TV stations
- Advertise in or get stories in free, throw-away newspapers
- People are motivated to attend a meeting when angry about something or fearful about something: MTC needs something that generates interest for people to attend a meeting
- Utilize ethnic media (mentions Richmond Post and Richmond Globe)
- Post announcements in public hospitals or clinics, where people have long waits and are desperate to read anything!
- Today use of the Web is important; it is available in lots of places (cafes, libraries)
- One of the best ways to get people to attend a meeting is to advertise that lunch or dinner will be served
- Going to churches is a good idea – set up meetings at a church hall; have meeting begin right after the church service is over; invite the general public, as well as church members. It is important to find a time that is convenient for the public. Target urban churches
- Make a booth that looks like a big call box and people could go in and make their comments
- Submit editorials and letters-to-the-editors to newspapers; surveys show that letters to the editor as well as the editorial section of newspapers are very well-read sections of the newspapers
- Consider using actors – an actor connected with [space] travel. Actors could be used to make it cool to use transit, i.e., find an actor that can take away negative social stigma attached to transit, especially among youth groups
- Use of an 800 phone number people can use to call in to the Commission, or to call the advisory committees

- Make sure MTC's phone number is in every phonebook in the region, not just in Oakland's phonebook
- Advisors could take MTC's PowerPoint presentations and make a presentation on behalf of MTC at additional places; get more questions, comments
- More education for the advisors would be good and help the members become better advisors. Advisors need to know terminology, structure of agency, specifics on certain issues
- Host an occasional field trip for advisors, to see a project or a service. Have outside groups make presentations to advisors. Suggests some funding to help presenters get to MTC advisory meetings
- Invite MTC executive director to attend EDAC meetings once in a while
- Ask to get a copy of the current public participation plan. Item to be mailed or emailed to all members
- Suggests that an existing advisor agree to "adopt" a new member, so that new member has someone to call for advice, to offer guidance

Partnership Technical Advisory Committee

February 26, 2007

1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Idea:

- Cable TV is a good way to reach the public

Public Participation Plan
Focus Group Meeting Notes
MTC Advisory Committees
February 13, 2007, 12 noon – 2 p.m.
MTC's offices

Participants:

Herb Crowle, EDAC
Frank Gallo, MCAC
Marshall Loring, EDAC
Dennis Trenten, EDAC

Margaret Okuzumi, Advisory Council
Bob Planthold, Advisory Council
Michael Rubiano, MCAC

Focus Group Discussion:

Q #1 What would draw you to an event to discuss Bay Area transportation issues?

- Topic is key; one that interests me.
- People are motivated to participate if it's in their interest to do so. The challenge is to describe the relevance of a meeting in a way that makes people feel it is in their best interest to get involved.
- Co-sponsorship by a familiar group is another way to draw more participants to a meeting.
- Childcare, food, flexible schedule (other than during the work day) are very important.
- Transit connections key. Evening meetings are nice, but transit is not always available at night.
- Don't forget the social aspects of meeting attendance. People are more likely to attend not only if a familiar group cosponsors the meeting, but if someone they know is planning to attend.
- Working people are more able to participate if meetings are scheduled during off hours.
- Translation services are key — including “simultaneous” translation that allows multiple participants to communicate with a translator during the meeting via headsets.
- “Take one” cards or “Bus drops” are other important ways to get the word out about meetings.
- MTC should work more on its “brand,” that way people would be more likely to engage.
- Free transit passes would motivate many to participate.

Q #2 What is the best way to notify you about a meeting?

- Don't overlook the news media. A well-placed story on radio or via newspaper is an effective way to attract people to a meeting. Display ads combined with “free” news coverage in some of the small ethnic newspapers are good ways to maximize meeting attendance.
- Small neighborhood newspapers are also widely read in their respective communities, and should not be overlooked as a way to help get the word out about MTC meetings.
- Display ads are not as effective as general news coverage in terms of attracting people to meetings.
- E-mail — in the form of multiple notices — along with postcards are helpful to increasing meeting attendance.
- Working with local groups — such as homeowners' associations, churches or community-based organizations — is a good way to reach active people, but it requires relationship building.

Q #3 Which of the following tools would help you express your views at a meeting? (e.g., translated material, electronic voting, questionnaire, facilitated discussion, voting game)

- All of the above, plus good visuals
- Questionnaires are not best for meetings

- Translation would be key for people who don't speak English or are hearing impaired
- Facilitated discussions are the best way to hear from many voices; a good facilitator will enable shy people to express their views
- Questionnaires work well when you are not under time pressure; they are a way for you to express your opinions in a detailed, specific way
- Voting games are helpful
- You need to customize which tools you will use based on the audience

Q #4 Other than a meeting, what venue or forum would you most likely use to express your views? (e.g., Web survey, mail survey, focus group, email comment, letter, online discussion, kiosk at a public gathering place, telephone comment line)

- Focus groups are a good way to get detailed comments
- Web surveys are limited in terms of the audience that is able to participate in them
- Web surveys are a good way to reach people who might not otherwise participate
- Paying someone to survey at specified locations (bus stops, e.g.) is good way to collect comments
- Telephone surveys are intrusive and annoying
- Telephone surveys are the best way to get a true picture of the views of the larger population

Q #5 How would you like to have complex material presented to you? (Information online for review in advance, video, live presentation, tabletop display, brochure, flyer or other printed material, map, chart or other visual aid, etc.)

- I like to see the same questions presented many different ways; this enables people to comment in the way that best suits them
- Seeing material online in advance is good, but it's often hard to find material on Web sites
- Tabletop displays are great
- I prefer video, as it allows me to see and hear
- It's important to provide "take aways" that allow people to review the material later
- Provide more interactive material on CDs in advance of the meetings or for review later — at the meeting itself, you need "hard copies" of material.

Q #6 MTC would like to keep you informed of how your comments have factored into its decisions. What is the best way to inform you of those actions? (e-mail and regular mail, audiocast of MTC meetings, *Transactions* newsletter, Web site)

- Use email with a Web site link
- Local newspapers are an excellent way to keep people informed
- I prefer regular mail
- Email and regular mail
- A bimonthly MTC newsletter is too infrequent
- MTC's Web site is still too cumbersome to navigate
- I like the fact that you are asking this question; this is a very important step to take
- The audiocast/audio archive feature on MTC's web site is really handy for people, and it allows them to easily keep abreast of current developments and get background information
- MTC's newsletter is a really useful tool to keep updated
- The archival information on MTC's Web site is very useful

Q #7 How can MTC further assist you as advisors? (All-day training/orientation on transportation topics, training for committee chairs and vice-chairs, more emphasis on committee work plans, etc.)

- All-day training would interest only a few, better to keep it to 2-3 hours at a time
- Better orientation and overview of key issues, more use of timelines with key milestones of when comments are needed, etc.
- More process charts and flow charts would be helpful
- More information on “other” advisory groups to MTC would be helpful (for example, the Partnership, and other groups, such as the regional bicycle advisory group)
- Better committee rosters, with photos and bio information
- Focusing on work plans, with use of performance benchmarks would be very useful
- Tie advisor work plans to MTC’s recently completed strategic plan; advisors saw the draft, but never got the final plan.
- Structure meeting agendas to the advisor work plans
- Getting the packet out early enough is critical
- Allow sufficient time on agendas for major items (30 or 45 minutes really isn’t enough time).
- Emailed packets would be helpful, though not everyone has a computer
- Introduce important topics at one meeting, then have a discussion at the next

Q #8 MTC directs much of its public participation resources toward developing the Bay Area’s long-range transportation plan, which MTC updates every four years. The policies in the plan also guide all future funding decisions, so MTC feels that this is the place where the public can have the most impact. Do you agree with this approach?

- I like this approach
- This emphasis might not always be effective; for example, the voter-approved bond revenue did not come out of MTC’s long-range plan
- Local entities are always pursuing their own agenda absent any regional review, so I don’t know that every jurisdiction truly believes that MTC’s plan is THE way.
- MTC needs to be prepared to get input on items (such as the infrastructure bond) that happen outside of the long-range planning process
- This focus might limit MTC’s ability to do more general outreach and involvement
- The regional transportation plan is pretty important, but it is confusing to the public to have such a long process
- MTC needs to be clear about the staging of such a complicated process

Q #9 To implement the long-range transportation plan, MTC also creates a shorter term document called the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). MTC works closely with local public agencies on the TIP, and notifies the general public of the opportunity to comment via the MTC Web site, legal notices in newspapers and public hearings. Do you agree with this approach?

- It appears that by the time these projects come along in this process, it’s really too late to have much of an influence as an individual. So if you can’t impact or change a project, the public will be frustrated trying to participate at this point.
- The TIP process is an important process for those who have the knowledge base to participate
- You should encourage written comments and written feedback

Public Participation Plan
Peer Panel Review
February 15, 2007, 12 noon – 2 p.m.
MTC's offices

Attendees:

Juven Alvarez, Caltrans
Garth Hopkins, Caltrans
Beth Wolukas, Alameda County CMA
Arielle Bourgart, Contra Costa Transportation Authority
Yvonne Morrow, WestCAT
Kathleen Cha, ABAG
Gail Collins, VTA
Nichele Ayers, AC Transit
Elizabeth Richards, Solano Transportation Authority

Ted Matley, Federal Transit Administration
Joy Gibson, Santa Rosa City Bus
Mike Furnary, Tri Delta Transit
Sarah Layton Wallace, TAM
Rosemary Booth, LAVTA
Fran Reid, LAVTA
Jonah Weinstein, SamTrans/Caltrain
Tess Lengyel, ACTIA

Focus Group Discussion:

Q #1 In your experience, which item below would most likely draw the public to a meeting or event?

- Electronic voting.
- Provide an incentive (payment) for low-income residents to attend.
- Focus groups.
- Web polls.
- Co-sponsor meetings with community organizations.
- Use existing meetings/forums.
- Topic needs to be relevant.
- Guerilla marketing/targeted marketing.
- Door-to-door flyers.
- 60-day advance notice for a meeting.
- Position people in malls, or in very local areas, and survey people.

Q #2 In your experience, what is the best way to notify the public about a meeting or event?

- Ads can have value if they are large and in a local media outlet; legal notices have little value.
- Targeted strategy.
- Buy ads in ethnic media.
- Use of chambers of commerce.
- Ask the public: use short survey asking questions such as 'what is best way to get info to you, etc.'
- Ask transit operators to help notify their riders: car cards in transit vehicles, seat drops on rail cars.
- People care about what they can relate to: give your message a human story/angle; that will get the attention of a lot more people.
- Editorial meetings.
- Use other agencies' Web sites to advertise your meeting/event
- Advertise your Web site address; use post cards to advertise URL.
- Target certain geographic areas (by sorting cards by zip code) and customize messages.
- Piggyback meeting before/after another meeting; give people two reasons to go to meeting location.
- All of the above, multiple times.

Q #3 In your experience, which of the following tools would best help the public express their views at a meeting?

- Use maps and charts for visualization.
- With a facilitated discussion, display comments/questions so all can see; this helps to generate energy within group. With facilitator, he/she can drill down on comments and get additional info.
- When you use voting at meeting, you limit options/choices; voting doesn't let people indicate what it is they do want. Make sure you encourage use of comment cards as well.
- Use display booths with experts stationed at them at beginning of meeting.
- Comment cards.

Q #4 Other than a meeting, what other venue or forum would your agency most likely use to express its views to the public?

- Kiosk in a public space, although actual experience with this is limited.
- Radio ads during morning commute, directing people to Web site.
- Public web site, with accompanying public comment section.
- Technology that builds communities and leverages content, like Neighborhood America.
- 511 prompt to allow people to comment.
- Use scientific polling in planning efforts.
- Comment card, with return postage.

Q #5 In your experience, which is the best way to communicate complex material to the public?

- Public participation via the Internet.
- I-pod casts.
- Web audiocasts.
- Make any issue personal, so that it has relevance.
- All of them, the more the better.

Q #6 In your experience, which is the best way to inform the public about how their comments have factored into your agency's decisions?

- Use postcard with information on where to see decisions on Web.
- Tell people at a meeting where they will be able to find the final document.
- Targeted response.
- How to show the public you used their comment is challenging; don't want people to think agency does not care.
- Use info from a meeting's sign-in sheets to continue communication/participation with people.
- Let them have commentary along the way.
- Tell people from outset what will happen with their comments.
- Be thoughtful in how you frame questions for public comment.
- Not all is open to review.

Q #7 Can you describe any potential new practices?

- Advertising through movie previews has been successful and is inexpensive and can be targeted.
- Contests co-sponsored with community groups, but have to go through agency Web site to enter contest.

- Get public to your Web site by whatever means, but then the writing and the design of the Web site has to draw the public to important issues/sections within your Web site.
- Write story/article for cable TV (or do research and make it easier for reporter to write a story).
- Free PSA's.
- Buy radio time for the year and trade out messages periodically.
- TV sponsorship and TV forum.
- Share press releases: One transit operator adds its own fact sheet (with local angle) to MTC's regional news release, and sends release to its local media outlets and business contacts.
- Consider using cable stations: suggests mid-Peninsula cable stations with news program "You Make the News" where agency literally can make its own news (station provides camera crew?).
- Use RSS feed to alert people when there has been a change in your Web site. (Although could be too much of an intrusion if folks are alerted to every little change/update on Web.)
- With electronic newsletter, put links right in masthead of e-newsletter.

Q #8 Describe a successful outreach or public participation campaign.

- "Get Caught Riding": Tri Delta Transit's guerilla marketing campaign that actually went out on buses and awarded bus riders prizes simply for riding the bus. The campaign was successful.
- Caltrain had unique promotion around love poems and singles event.
- It is important to engage other people to talk with us; we don't want to just talk to them. Can use community groups/advocate organizations to go out to public meetings with agency staff. Find a place on your agenda where regular folks who support your agency can speak in support of issue.
- A trusted individual can help promote idea/concept

Q #9 What is your experience using the Web for surveys and other outreach/public participation activities?

- Important to use Web, but important to know that large % of riders do not have access to Web.
- Automated, computer-generated translations are a necessary evil.
- Media may do their own translations.

Q #10 Can you assist MTC in notifying the public about specific events or surveys? If so, how?

- Use of agency newsletters or emails.
- Send emails to groups who can in turn email message to additional email lists.
- MTC should consider capacity building; it is a real challenge to explain what MTC does and MTC should cultivate a group of people who know MTC and can provide informed comments.
- Produce a nice quality "Take One" display for inside buses; transit operators probably would display it; a good way to get information about MTC or other issues out to transit riders.
- Some operators already have their own "Take One" display but could use help with different topics to present to their riders; would consider topics/issues with regional perspective from MTC.

Q #11 Any other suggestions?

- Use partners who have existing committees.
- Don't forget students at universities.
- Reach out to professional organizations: COMTO, WTS, ASCE, chambers, ethnic chambers.
- Media Partnerships:
 - Use key stories with individual human interest element
 - Use focused pieces/articles with board members
 - Use focused pieces/articles with advisory committee members

MTC Public Participation Plan
Bicycle and Pedestrian Advocates Focus Group
March 9, 2007, 12 noon – 2 p.m.
MTC's Offices

Attendees:

Linda Young, 511 Contra Costa
Jamie Perkins, East Bay Parks
John Brazil, City of San Jose

Sabrina Merlo, Bay Area Bicycle Coalition
Robert Raburn, East Bay Bicycle Coalition

Focus Group Discussion:

Q #1 What would draw you to a meeting or event to discuss Bay Area transportation issues?

- Include a community-based group in meeting planning or event sponsorship, which helps to legitimize event (e.g., East Bay Area Trails Council). Community leader or other well-known community member as a meeting host would be great.
- Email from community groups.
- Translation services – media in alternate language. Translation at meetings, or having meetings all in alternate languages. The bike and pedestrian community especially needs alternate language translation. Use native speakers for translation for accuracy and legitimacy of message.
- Use employers to attract people to an event, also use alternate languages.
- Interesting meeting topic.
- Take-aways and gifts – bicycle map, for example.
- Food
- Employer transportation fairs: stamps where attendees need to visit a certain number of stations or booths to gather information.

Q #2 What transportation-related meeting topic interests you most?

- Improving transit connections and reliability, expanding transit services.
- Pavement quality, especially bicycle trail maintenance.
- Safe Routes to Transit, Safe Routes to School.
- Closing the gap in bicycle network, ensuring that bicycle trails continue and don't abruptly stop.

Q #3 What is the best way to notify you about a meeting?

- Email
- Radio: using Clear Channel to place 30-second spots, especially Spanish language radio stations. Also traffic sponsorships. Radio is more affordable than expected.
- Movie theater advertising, other movie services, e.g., Fandango.
- Co-sponsor an event with community group, faith-based groups.
- Announcement in church newsletter, attended church service or event and make announcement.
- Guerilla marketing, targeted street marketing (e.g., Spare the Air Day).
- Outdoor campaign, Treasure Island Banner, bus shelter advertising (using public service rate), in-bus ads or car cards.
- Kiosks to provide information on an ongoing basis or for a one-time event, notices at kiosks in East Bay parks.
- Postcards for targeted marketing.
- NOT: newspaper ads, newsletter or MTC Web site

Q #4 Which of the following tools would help you express your views at a meeting?

- Facilitated discussions.
- Voting games as long as they aren't too complicated or group isn't too large. Use a graph or map.
- Electronic voting.
- Speaker/facilitator's style could impact comfort-level of group, e.g., have someone familiar/someone with a familiar style ask questions or lead discussion.
- Speaker cards, following up with facilitated discussions.
- Using both written and oral comments at an event.
- Have Web survey after a meeting to comment on a meeting topic. Use email to thank participants for attending meeting and prompt additional comments via a Web survey.

Q #5 Other than a meeting, what other venue or forum would you most likely use to express your views?

- Information booth/kiosk workers to go out into public to discuss a topic, e.g. hand-out written survey with pre-paid postage.
- VIP to go out into public to get input (e.g., Jerry Brown).
- Less labor-intensive Web option, like My Space.
- Blog, Web discussion threads, although may tend to get many of the same commenters
- Email listserv to get more complex information to a large number of people.
- Use rewards or gifts or drawing to entice people to participate in surveys or come to events.
- Web survey, using open-ended questions.
- Surveys in alternate languages.
- Focus groups that are co-sponsored by a community group.
- Transportation fairs and events.
- Phone comment line very time-consuming.

Q #6 MTC often has complex issues/topics it has to discuss with the public. How would you like to have complex material presented to you?

- Provide information online, including maps and charts.
- Downloadable presentations.
- Clear visuals are important.
- Good PowerPoint presentations using succinct, understandable text and clear maps and charts.
- Video.

Q #7 MTC would like to keep you informed of how your comments have factored into its decisions. What is the best way to inform you of those actions?

- Phone call, although some thought that this would be too time-consuming.
- Email response, even if a canned response, so someone knows an email comment has been received and system is working. Provide email link with ongoing information about process.
- Newsletters, e.g., *TransActions*.

Q #8 As bicycle and pedestrian advocates, what issues would you most like to provide input on?

- Project priorities, high-need projects.
- Plans and policies.
- Funding for both capital and maintenance.
- Coordination with other agencies to implement projects.

MTC Public Participation Plan

Low-income via LIFETIME (Low-Income Families' Empowerment through Education)

Focus Group

Friday, March 9, 2007 at 1 p.m.

LIFETIME's offices in San Leandro

LIFETIME is an organization that assists parents (mostly mothers) on welfare in getting a college education.

Attendees:

Carmelita Baker

Peace Esonwune

Dawn Love

Eden Spatz-Bender

Tina Howerton

Karen Smith

Benyam

Neicsa Jackson

Junebug Strohlin

Kirsten Elam

Focus Group Discussion:

Q #1 What would draw you to a meeting or event to discuss Bay Area Transportation issues?

- Food.
- Transit pass.
- Childcare.
- Translation services.
- Meeting topic needs to be relevant to my neighborhood and community (local focus).
- Want to be involved in making changes in policy and helping to make policy (wants to be part of entire process – to see the policy through).
- For low-income individuals food and childcare are important.
- Want to know that their comments will be taken into consideration, what they say means something, and they want to see results.

Q #2 What transportation-related meeting topic interests you most?

- Expanding public transportation services (i.e., more routes, increased frequency of bus service; more buses).
- Ways to reduce crowds on buses (overcrowding creates a hostile and dangerous environment).
- Ways to monitor and regulate crowds on transit at certain times.
- Cleaner technology for buses.
- Ways to alleviate cancer-causing fumes.
- Small children need to be able to have a seat (or at least hold on).
- Driver sensitivity training (sensitivity to parents traveling with small children).
- Cars for parents with small children.
- Improve supervision of drivers' conduct in the field.
- Customer service.
- Improve schedule/timeliness of transit (reliability).
- Connectivity.
- Affordability and potential student pricing (college students do not have much money; also, do 5 year olds really need to pay fares?).
- TOD and creating quality and safe TOD environments.

Q #3 What is the best way to notify you about a meeting?

- Email notice.
- Phone call.
- Postcard.
- Ad on bus.
- Car Cards.
- Ad at bus stop.
- Announcement from community group or church.

Q #4 Do you communicate regularly by e-mail? If so, how often?

- Weekly.
- Every few days.
- Access only at school.
- Communication via e-mail or online information needs to be balanced – there are still households without Internet access (and the issue is the monthly Internet payment – not necessarily the lack of ownership of the computer itself).

Q #5 Which of the following tools would help you express your views at a meeting?

- Translated materials.
- Questionnaire.
- Facilitated discussion or exercise to write down opinion.

Q #6 Other than a meeting, what other venue or forum would you most likely use to express your views?

- Survey on the bus.
- Survey distributed when you buy a Fast Pass (and returned when you buy another pass).
- Mail survey (but make sure they are postage pre-paid).
- E-mail.
- Focus group.
- Web survey.
- Phone comment line (toll free).
- Surveys on specific transit agencies (like Muni).
- Pass out surveys to community groups to distribute to their participants.
- Kiosks/brochures in common places like Safeway or even on a college/school campus (there needs to be an incentive to get people to come to the booth – such as a raffle).
- Interactive meeting/presentation (the comment was related to using TV, but it could work for audio/Webcast as well).

Q #7 MTC often has complex issues/topics it has to discuss with the public. How would you like to have complex materials presented to you?

- Information online for review in advance.
- Video.
- Live presentation.

- Brochure, flyer or other printed material.
- Map, chart or other visual aid.
- Interested capacity building.
- Creative video exploring.
- Combination of styles above.

Q #8 MTC would like to keep you informed of how your comments have factored into its decisions. Which is the best way to inform you of those actions?

- Way you communicate to begin with.
- Community organizations.
- Regular mail.
- Audiocast of Commission meetings.
- Through low-income groups.

Q #9 Any other comments about MTC's public participation process?

- Cultural competency training for drivers.
- Safety on buses.
- Getting MTC's name out there – people need to know what MTC does.
- When MTC releases the draft Public Participation Plan, send people an e-mail.

MTC Public Participation Plan
Welfare to Work Working Group
March 23, 2007, 10:30 – 11 a.m.
MTC's Offices

Attendees:

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Kim Walton, SF MTA | John Murray, SF HAS | Lisa Hammon, WCCTAC |
| Paul Branson, Contra Costa County | Gail Jack, Solano County HSS | Pat Piras |
| Mary Buttaro, County of Marin | Tina Spencer, AC Transit | Bob Allen, Urban Habitat |
| Melissa Jones, City of Alameda | Lionel Vera, AC Transit | Dawn Love, LIFETIME |
| Paul Tatsuta, Outreach & Escort, Inc. | | |

Focus Group Discussion:

Q #1 What would draw W2W participants to a meeting or event to discuss Bay Area transportation issues?

- Materials in different formats, e.g., Braille, large print, recording, etc.
- Easily accessible location, close to public transit, easy parking.
- Interesting meeting topic, relevant meeting topic.
- Convenient meeting time.
- Meeting co-sponsored by a familiar community-based or other reliable group.
- Childcare.
- Food.
- Transit pass or other gift.
- Translation services.
- Accessible rest rooms.

Q #2 What is the best way to notify W2W participants about a meeting?

- Email.
- Notification by a community or other known group, e.g., social service agency.
- Notification through school.
- Advisory Committee members.
- Public access television.
- Ensure that message is understandable by non-experts.

Q #3 Which of the following tools would help W2W participants express their views at a meeting?

- Small group discussion.
- Maps.
- Focus groups.
- Take-away mail survey (postage paid).
- Translation at meeting, including ASL if needed.

Q #4 Other than a meeting, what other venue or forum would W2W participants most likely use to express their views?

- Don't assume that everyone has access to Internet, computer.
- Don't assume that everyone speaks English.
- Offer gift for mail or other surveys.
- Mail survey with pre-paid postage.
- Focus groups; brief mail surveys, also in alternate languages
- Use social service agency meeting times with the public to provide short written survey to clients.

MTC Public Participation Plan

Labor Representatives

Focus Group

April 12, 2007

12 noon – 1:30 p.m.

MTC's Offices

Attendees:

Michael Penderfrafft, ATU Local 1605

Stephen Wong, ATU Local 265

Loretta Springer, ATU Local 265

Tom Fink, ATU Local 265

Tony Withington, ATU International

Chuck Cook, ATU International

Jesse Hunt, ATU Local 1555

Dave C. Garcia, ATU Local 1605

Yvonne M. Williams, ATU Local 192

Shane Gusman, ATU Lobbyist

Focus Group Discussion:

Q #1 What would draw you to a meeting or event to discuss Bay Area transportation issues?

- Convenient location and time.
- Food sweetens pot, but isn't everything.
- Interesting meeting topic, one that's compelling to members (especially funding).
- Knowing that input is meaningful, early in process.
- Know agenda in advance, posted on Web site, sent by email.
- Seeing results of input in future keeps interested, ongoing communication, explain decisions.

Q #2 What transportation-related meeting topic interests you most?

- Figuring out alternative, stable sources of funding, other than sales tax.
- Expanding public transit.
- Increasing TODs.
- Emergency services, funding for staffing to improve security.
- Regional emergency plan, emergency preparedness and ensuring that the plan is communicated to all staff.

Q #3 What is the best way to notify you about a meeting?

- Email listserv.
- Community groups, announcement at meetings.
- Mail flyer.
- Phone call if necessary.
- Use many methods to ensure attendance.
- Car cards.

Q #4 Which of the following tools would help you express your views at a meeting?

- Facilitated discussion.

Q #5 Other than a meeting, what other venue or forum would you most likely use to express your views?

- Focus group.
- Blogs.
- Phone comment line.
- Non-meetings are limited; you must meet in-person to get nuance.

Q #6 MTC often has complex issues/topics it has to discuss with the public. How would you like to have complex material presented to you?

- All of the above (all options).
- “Draw me a picture.”
- Make all information truly understandable by public.

Q #7 MTC would like to keep you informed of how your comments have factored into its decisions. What is the best way to inform you of those actions?

- Email.
- Regular mail.
- Newsletter.

MTC Public Participation Plan
Private Transportation Providers
Focus Group
April 17, 2007
12 noon – 1:30 p.m.
MTC's Offices

Attendees:

Hal Mellegard, Yellow Cab
Cindy Ward, Desoto Cab
John Salani, Bayporter

Dan Hines, National Cab
Roger Hooson, SF Intl. Airport
Matt Curwood, Super Shuttle

Focus Group Discussion:

Q #1 What would draw you to a meeting or event to discuss Bay Area transportation issues?

- Interesting meeting topic.
- What role do we play in transportation?

Q #2 What transportation-related meeting topic interests you most?

- Shuttles and carpool lane issues.
- Alternative fuel.
- Freeway regulations (type of vehicle on certain freeways).
- Loosening of certain regulations on the taxi industry (pricing especially).

Q #3 What is the best way to notify you about a meeting?

- Email with link to MTC's Web site.

Q #4 Which of the following tools would help you express your views at a meeting?

- Questionnaire.
- Discussion in small groups.

Q #5 Other than a meeting, what other venue or forum would you most likely use to express your views?

- Email comment.

Q #6 MTC often has complex issues/topics it has to discuss with the public. How would you like to have complex material presented to you?

- Information online for review in advance.
- Live presentation.
- Printed material.

Q #7 MTC would like to keep you informed of how your comments have factored into its decisions. What is the best way to inform you of those actions?

- Email.
- Transactions newsletter.